



Dearborn Public Schools and TMP Associates, Inc. for the Addition to Fordson High School, Dearborn

When it was dedicated on March 22, 1928, Fordson High School was hailed as “one of the finest school buildings in the United States.” In September 2003 the architecture firm TMP Associates, Inc., on behalf of the Dearborn Public Schools, contacted the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding a significant addition the firm was planning for Fordson High School. Both TMP and the school board were well aware of the architectural and historic significance of this registered historic site and were interested in including the SHPO as an active partner in the design review process for the addition.

Building on the school’s history of inspirational design, TMP created a spectacular 372,583 square foot addition that reflects the detailing and materials of the original building, but accommodates new fully modern classrooms, a student-run spirit store, science and computer labs, and a state of the art cafeteria and kitchen. Among the details that were critical to the spectacular success of this addition were the school board’s willingness to put a stone veneer on the addition using materials from the original quarry, the inclusion of carved stone details at window and door openings derived from the historic building design, the use of a high pitched slate roof, and picturesque building massing.

This project demonstrates that through a combination of thought, skill, dedication to excellence, and collaboration Michigan’s historic schools can be rehabilitated and enlarged to accommodate the changing needs of students and educators and provide students, staff and the community at large with an inspirational environment in which to live, learn, work, and play.

Construction Manager: Skanska Building USA, Inc.

Historic Preservation in Michigan

